

CALIFORNIA

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

AUG 17 1984

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THE GULL



THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS

The September GGAS meeting will present Kevin Schafer, a Berkeley photographer, in a slide illustrated lecture on the Pribilof Islands. Kevin has worked as a biologist on the Farallon Islands, has been postmaster for a season at Antarctica and was a guide on the Pribilofs during the summer of 1983.

Located in the middle of the Bering Sea, the Pribilof Islands of Alaska are the breeding home of a remarkable collection of marine birds and mammals. Included are the largest colony of Northern Fur Seals in the world and among the best places to see many northern pelagic bird species, such as the Crested Auklet, the Red-faced Cormorant and Red-legged Kittiwake. Kevin will show slides of these and many other species of the Pribilofs, and will discuss the history of the islands, the Aleut people that call them home and the controversies surrounding the killing of the fur Seals that takes place every summer.

His photographic work appears in several national magazines. An exhibit of his Pribilof photographs is scheduled to be shown at the California Academy of Sciences in 1985. Join us for an evening of natural history and photography from one of the most remarkable centers of wildlife in the United States.

This meeting will be On **Thursday, Sept. 13 at 7:30 p.m.** at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The October meeting will be in San Francisco at a place to be announced in the next issue of The GULL. The speaker will be Pete Gogan and his subject will be the Point Reyes-Farallon Islands Marine Sanctuary. Reserve the 11th of Oct. for GGAS in San Francisco.

— PROGRAM COMMITTEE

BIRD SEED SALE

The insert in this issue announces the first annual GGAS Bird Seed Sale. It is our intent to provide quality merchandise at a reasonable price. The sale will be conducted at a location in San Francisco and one in Berkeley. (See the insert for details. Your participation will additionally support the activities of the chapter.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, September 8—Beginners' Trip to Coyote Hills Regional Park. See the July/August GULL for details.

Saturday, September 8—San Mateo Coast. See the July/August GULL for details.

Wednesday, September 12—Mini trip to Alameda South Shore. Meet at 10:30 a.m. at Arrowhead Marsh Parking lot. From Hwy. 17 take Hegenberger Rd., turn right again at Swan Way. Drive to the second parking lot. After lunch, when the tide is right we will also bird Alameda South Shore.

Bring lunch and scopes. Leaders: Delpha de Timofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

Saturday, September 15 — Coastal San Francisco. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the parking lot between South and Middle Lakes (Chain of Lakes) near the 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way entrance to Golden Gate Park. We will bird in the park, Lake Merced and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in search of early migrants found in the area. Bring your lunch and be prepared for cold weather near the coast. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074.)

Sunday, September 16 — Abbott's Lagoon. Meet in the parking lot at Abbott's Lagoon at 8 a.m. Take Sir Francis Drake Blvd. through the town of Inverness and continue right on Pierce Point Road to the parking lot. We will walk a total of about four miles. We will be looking for migrating shorebirds. Bring lunch, liquids and a spotting scope if you have one. Dress for variable weather. Leader: Tony Briggs (282-3142) or ask for Tony by name at 626-3131, an answering service. (✓)

Saturday/Sunday, September 22/23 —Yosemite National Park. **Saturday** meet at 8 a.m. at Bridalveil Campground. **Sunday** meet at 8 a.m. at the Chevron Station at Crane Flat. Bring lunch and liquids on both days. Be prepared for any kind of weather. This trip is limited to 15 people. Call GGAS (843-2222) for reservations. Note: the date of this trip has been changed from that announced in the July / August GULL. Leader: Jon Zablackis. \$(✓).

Saturday, September 22—Lands End, San Francisco. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Palace of the Legion of Honor parking lot (Lincoln Park). From Geary Blvd. go north (toward the Bay) on 34th Ave. to the top of the hill (through the golf course) and park in the large circular lot to the east (right). Lunch optional. We will walk about two miles. Leader: Alan Hopkins (585-5669).

Saturday/Sunday, September 29/30 —Mt. Pinos for California Condors. Meet at 8 a.m. to watch for California Condors at the Mt. Pinos Condor Observation Point. We should see a variety of other species common to the high mountains of California in summer. Be prepared for hot days at lower elevations. At the top of Mt. Pinos it may be windy and cold, so bring a warm jacket, a hat and sun screen. Bring your scope, lunch and liquids both days.

From the Bay Area drive south on I-5 past the town of Grapevine (south of Bakersfield) to Frazier Park off-ramp. If you reach Gorman you have gone too far. From I-5 go west past Frazier Park, through Lake-of-the-Woods and follow the signs (N.W.) toward the Mt. Pinos Recreation Area.

The road passes through Cuddy Valley and a yellow pine forest. It ends at a large parking lot. From there take the dirt road to the left for about a mile to the asphalt parking lot where we will meet at 8 a.m. The dirt road is rough but is passable if you drive slowly. Camping is available at Los Padres National Forest. McGill Campground provides the best facilities and fine birding. It is located on the road to the observation area. It may be wise to arrive before mid-afternoon Friday because McGill and other campgrounds may fill for the week-end. Motels and restaurants are available at Gorman and other nearby towns. Leader: Eben McMillan. If you plan to attend call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) and Leave your name, phone number and the number of persons in your party. The trip will be cancelled for bad weather or lack of interest. (✓)

Sunday, September 30—Point Reyes. Meet at 7 a.m. in the parking lot by the market in Inverness. From there we will caravan to various points on the Point Reyes Peninsula. Bring lunch and liquids. (The Inverness Market will not be open at 7 a.m.) We may see Pectoral Sandpipers and vagrant Warblers. Leader: Chris Carpenter (832-4410). (✓)

Saturday, October 6—Alameda and San Leandro Bay Shoreline. Meet at 8 a.m. in Alameda at Broadway and Shoreline Dr. We will bird the Elsie B. Roemer Bird Sanctuary and the San Leandro Bay Regional Shoreline. Bring lunch and liquids. Shorebirds should be present in numbers so bring a spotting scope if you have one. We should also see some land birds. Leader: Leora Feeney (522-8528). (✓)

Sunday, October 7—Sunol Regional Park. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Park Headquarters. Take I-680 south, exit at Calaveras Rd., go left and follow the signs to Sunol Park (about 5

miles). Bring lunch. We should see some wintering residents and fall migrants common to the interior. Leader: Art Edwards (447-3720). (✓)

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 236-9053 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290 or the GGAS office 843-2222).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

SUCCESSFUL WINE TASTING

About 80 persons enjoyed the gorgeous day and the wines, cheeses and cookies at Lyford House, Richardson Bay Sanctuary, July 10. We raised over \$1000 for Audubon Canyon Ranch.

The short Annual Meeting was held out of doors at 2 p.m. after everyone had been served a glass of Hop Kiln Winer's "A Thousand Flowers". Kevin Shelley accepted an award on behalf of Sala Burton, honoring the late Congressman Phil Burton.

Cheeses -30 or so- like Havarti with dill, Goat Cheese with Herbs, and Oregon Blue were provided by George Peyton. They were delicious; thanks, George.

After the Gewurztraminer, Marty Griffin's "Big Red", etc., chocolate cookies provided by Nancy Conzett, Ruth Feinstein, Helen Green and Hazel Houston were washed down with the marvelous Carbernet Sauvignon.

Thanks, much to Marty Griffin for the wines. Thanks, also, to the pourers and helpers like Leon, Lila, Dan, Joan, Peter, Nicola, Hillary, David and Peggy. And special thanks to Beth

Hunning for making Lyford House available. And people said they really enjoyed the occasion. It was fun.

—Hazel Houston,
Hospitality Committee

(Ed. note: and thanks to Hazel Houston from all of us for all she did!)

OBSERVATIONS: June and early July Through July 10

UNCLASSIFIED WATERBIRDS

Several waterbirds are worth mentioning but do not fit any of the following categories. Three Northern Fulmars were noted on a Farallon boat trip June 24 (KH, PW, et al.). A **Brown Booby** on July 1 flew past a boat one half mile east of SE Farallon Island (PW, KC, et al.) and continued past Saddle Rock where last September's first Northern California record individual roosted (TMcE, HC). One observer lucky enough to see both birds noted that both showed the same subadult (2nd year?) plumage, and he raised the possibility that it was the same individual (PW). My own guess would be to the contrary. An adult Little Blue Heron visited Coyote Hills June 30 (JS).

SUMMERING WATERFOWL

The Ross' Goose that was still at Stafford Lake June 3 (KC) could not have been very healthy. Brant is locally regular on our outer coast, even in summer, but three at Brooks Island, Contra Costa Co. July 8 (KHi, et al.) were a surprise inside the Bay. A male Blue-winged Teal was on Hayward Oxidation Ponds June 9 (CS), and two more males were at Cader Lane Ponds June 16 (KC). The Hayward Oxidation Ponds also had a male Canvasback June 9 (CS), and three others were at the Albany Mudflat July 6 (GC). Also among our scarcer summering ducks were the female Common Goldeneye at Alameda Naval Air Station June 8 (SFB),

the female Bufflehead there all May and June (SFB, et al.), and the male Bufflehead at Albany Mudflats (GC). Rarer were the two Oldsquaws on the north side of Brooks Island June 29 through July 8 (PK, RAE, SFB, LRF, KHi, et al.). However, the duck in a class by itself was the female-plumaged **King Eider** with the Oldsquaws at Brooks Island. Also seen June 29-July 8 (PK, RAE, SFB, LRF, KHi, et al.).

Of the very few King Eiders seen in summer in California, most lingered in the same locations from the previous winter. Brooks Island is almost unknown to mainlanders, so it is likely that this eider has been here for months. I didn't see last winter's eider, but if this summer's individual is the same one that spent winter 1982-83 at Emeryville Marine then it has changed in several aspects of appearance. This would be possible due to maturation.

SUMMER SHOREBIRDS

For some shorebirds, the period at the start of summer during which there are no breeding individuals present on the wintering grounds is exceedingly brief (e.g. three weeks).

Nevertheless, there is this gap, so truly summering individuals may often be distinguished, despite difficulty and residual doubt.

Nearly all smaller shorebirds (dowitchers and smaller) breed at one year of age, unless ill or crippled. Larger species (Black-Bellied Plover and larger) are rather common as nonbreeders, which are presumably nearly all yearlings.

This summer the most interesting counts of summering nonbreeders came from two areas of abandoned salt evaporation ponds recently restored to tidal action and mudflat status. The dikes at Hayward Regional Shoreline (below HRS) were breached several years ago, but the pond

just east of San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters (Below HQ Flat) was opened in the past year.

At HQ Flat, impressive counts of Semipalmated Plovers were 45 on June 1 and 75 on June 25 (both CS). Although only five were seen there June 9, 57 were counted at HRS the same day (both CS), raising the question of movement between the two sites.

"Peep" counts at HQ Flats were ten Westerns and two Least June 1, and half of both numbers June 9 (all CS). Larger counts from late June may include early fall migrants.

Three Lesser Yellowlegs at Cader Lane Ponds June 16 (KC) were within the only month during which this species is very rare in Northern California.

UNSEASONAL LARIDS

The breeding plumaged **Common Black-headed Gull** at Irish Beach, north of Manchester, Mendocino Co., June 18-20 (PS) was not without summer precedent in Northern California, despite the species great rarity at any season. A Mew Gull at Cader Lane Ponds June 16 appeared to be in worn second summer plumage (KC). An adult Sabine's Gull inhabited Bodega Bay June 14-15 (NC, PC, et al.).

A first summer Common Tern was reported from Salinas River Mouth June 14 (RL), and an Arctic Tern from two miles north of Middle Farallon June 24 (KC, et al.).

NEWLY FOUND NESTING SITE

A nesting colony of Double-crested Cormorants found July 3 on the underside of the east end of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge (SFB, RAE, PK, LRF) amazingly represents the first nesting record for either of the two East Bay counties. It is likely that the cormorants have nested on this bridge before, and I would not be surprised to find them nesting on

either the Bay Bridge or the San Mateo Bridge also.

The pair of Black Oystercatchers that has frequented Castro Rocks and the Brooks Island breakwater off Brickyard Cove, Richmond, raised two chicks on Bird Island, Brooks Island. They were large but still flightless July 3 (PK, RAE, SFB, LRF). They are believed to have nested there initially last year (PMcC, FMcC). Now that we are accustomed to this pair's continued presence, to find them nesting so far inside the Bay is less startling than was their original discovery.

Wilson's Phalaropes are suspected, but apparently not proven, to nest at Cader Lane Ponds (KC). For example, on July 7 three adults acted distressed and defensive toward the observer (KemH), suggesting that they had chicks nearby.

LEAST TERNS

Alameda Naval Air Station Least Tern nests peaked at 40, 90% on a new site near the traditional one. Virtually all of these nesting attempts ended in predation on the eggs or chicks, but many pairs are renesting, some on Oakland Airport, and others at the traditional Naval Air Station site. These second clutches are suffering some predation losses. Hopes for a successful reproductive season are once again dwindling.

On June 30 a colony of about six pairs was confirmed at Pittsburg (RAE), and there were apparently a few nests in both of the last two years. We hope to find an unknown colony made up of adults missing from Alameda/Oakland and Bair Island but it looks as though the 1981 nesting season, when we (LDC, SFB, PK, et al.) saved most young terns from predation and accidents, will still be the only good year in the last seven.

HANGERS ON

On Feb. 27, 1971, birders first ob-

served a Brown Wood Owl, *Strix leptogrammica*, in Cordonices Canyon Berkeley. Neighbors suggested that this native of south Asia had been present as much as three years earlier. Although it was obviously an escaped captive and was sustained largely on gift chicken necks and hamburger, the fact that it survived between 13 and 16 years is worth recounting. This spring, shortly after its continued presence was noted by this column, this owl apparently died. It was last seen standing motionless in the middle of Cordonices Creek, for no known reason (BU)!

A relative newcomer, present only since June 18, 1978, the adult male **Great-tailed Grackle** was still doing fine in San Francisco Aquatic Park as of June 25 (DW).

ARID IRRUPTION

In contrast to May, June had no reports of Costa's Hummingbirds. However, male Costa's depart very early so this is perhaps expected.

Nevertheless, the arid irruption continues. Never confirmed breeding west of the Sierra, **18 Black-throated Sparrows** were apparently nesting in chaparral on the way into Folsom Lake Peninsula Campground May 23 (EH). Four Black-chinned sparrows there that day and a singing Grasshopper Sparrow along Salmon Falls Road also represent local range expansions (all EH). The nesting Black-chinned Sparrows along Nimitz Way remained through June (mob). Elsewhere in Tilden Park, up to two were found at both Big Springs (BW, JM) and Volmer Peak (RMcN). One was belatedly reported from Sweeney Ridge Trail, Pacifica, May 20 (C&CK), and another Black-chin was heard along Gazos Creek Road, San Mateo Co., June 16 (JR).

About 12 Lawrence's Goldfinches were at Stafford Lake June 3 (KC) one or two were still in Tilden Park

June 10 (MP), and another was again seen at Point Reyes Lighthouse June 13 (LCB).

I might not normally list a Western Kingbird at Nimitz Way Tilden Park, however one on June 10 (JM) seems so concordant with the multi-species pattern of arid irruption that it deserves note.

EASTERN VAGRANTS

This spring vagrant season was quite poor, both in species diversity and in the number of individuals. In fact, the total seasonal tally on SE Farallon was only eight individuals of four species (PRBO). The only wave was June 13-15.

An Eastern Kingbird was near Nunes Ranch, Point Reyes, June 13-14 (LCB et al.).

The outstanding find of the eastern vagrants was a pair of **Northern Parulas feeding their fledgling** one half mile north of Driftwood Realty, Inverness Park, June 9-16 (MF, SF, mob), with the juvenal still there June 26 (DW). Although far from our most common vagrant, sometimes the two sexes coincide here. When they do, the pendulous lichens of the northern California coast must be irresistible to them as a stimulus to nest.

A singing male Chestnut-sided Warbler was along Gazos Creek Road June 16 (JR). Single Magnolia Warblers arrived on SE Farallon May 28 & 31 (PRBO), and one visited Nunes Ranch June 13-14 (LCB, JM, et al.). A "Myrtle" Yellow-rumped Warbler at Mendoza Ranch June 14 could be considered an eastern vagrant (JM). A Palm Warbler stopped at Nunes June 13 (LCB). Mendoza had a singing male Bay-breasted Warbler June 15-16 (LCB, et al.). A silent male Black-and-white Warbler foraged near the Jewel Lake boardwalk in Tilden Park June 13 (RMcN), and possibly the same male was up the Packrat Trail July 5 & 6 (IB).



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY WILD BIRD SEED SALE

GGAS is holding its first annual Wild Bird Seed Sale. We are proud to be offering the highest quality seed available, "Volkman", at the lowest price in the Bay Area. Bird seeds are sold on the commodity market just as cotton or wheat are sold. Seed availability and seasonal market conditions effect price and overall quality of wild bird seed. Most of the wild bird seed sold in supermarkets is loaded with inexpensive "filler" seed such as hemp and other things that our wild birds simply won't eat. If you offer this to your bird customers, a lot of what you paid for is wasted.

GGAS Special Mix, a blend to our standard, is priced to compete with supermarket seed, but it contains no waste seed. It is a "best buy" that will keep your winter yard alive with native wild birds and reward you with their company, their remarkable beauty and fascinating behavior.

The Bay Area is blessed with an abundance of winter birds that are easily attracted to bird feeding stations. By purchasing wild bird seed from GGAS you will not only keep your yard full of life, you will be putting life into the **GGAS Conservation Committee**. The Committee speaks effectively as your voice for wildlife and conservation issues. It is heard in both Sacramento and Washington. The 1984-85 budget stringency restricts operations. Your order for bird seed will add support for the Society's conservation activities.

Tell your friends and neighbors about the sale. GGAS will reap the financial benefits, you will have quality seed for less, and the birds will have seed available when wild foods are not plentiful.

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

WILD BIRD SEED SALE

PICKUP DATE: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED: Premium mix, the "Rolls-Royce" of bird seed contains no low cost fillers that birds flick aside. Composed of white and red millet and sudan grass screenings (a favorite of Bay Area birds).

GGAS SPECIAL WILD BIRD SEED MIX: Top quality traditional mix specially blended for us to meet the needs of Bay Area Birds. It contains white and red millet, black oil sunflower seed, milo and rape seed. This mix is superior to any commercial grade wild bird seed sold in the area and is an excellent buy for the money.

BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED: According to research done by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology this seed is preferred two to one over the medium striped variety. It is high in oil content and nutritive value and appeals to chickadees and nuthatches, titmice, Scrub and Steller's Jays, finches and many other bird species. This is the best all around food for attracting the largest number of desirable birds.



STRIPED MEDIUM SUNFLOWER SEED: Slightly lower nutritive value, but much larger seed. The same species attracted by the Black Oil Sunflower seed will find this interesting. Good for those who traditionally have offered a variety of seed in their feedings.

NIGER (THISTLE SEED): Imported from India, this seed is 98% pure. It is a minute seed rich in nourishing oil. It will attract both American and Lesser Goldfinches, but is unappealing to larger birds and squirrels. It will not
sprout in your yard

PRICES

WILD BIRD SEED		WILD BIRD SEED		SUNFLOWER SEED		NIGER	
VOLKMAN		GGAS SPECIAL MIX		(BLACK OR STRIPED)		(THISTLE SEED)	
20 lbs.	\$ 8.50	20 lbs.	\$ 6.00	10 lbs.	\$ 8.00	5 lbs.	\$ 7.50
50 lbs.	18.00	50 lbs.	11.50	25 lbs.	20.00		

"All foods are most efficiently utilized when offered according to an understanding of bird behavior and feeding preferences. Since the species that prefer white proso millet tend to be ground foragers, this tiny grain works best when scattered on the ground, spread on a feeding table, or combined in a mixture in a stable pole mounted feeder. Conversely, the species that prefer sunflower seed are acclimated to the narrow rims and perches of unstable hanging feeders. A biological approach to displaying seeds, suet and all other foods will help to eliminate waste and reduce expense."

—from **BANQUETS FOR BIRDS**
The National Audubon Society



INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORDERING ARE PRINTED OVER-LEAF

ALL ORDERS MUST BE PREPAID

AND RECEIVED BY GGAS BY OCTOBER 22, 1984

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

You must place your order and prepay by Oct. 22. **THERE WILL BE NO SEED AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE DISTRIBUTION POINT.** By Nov. 1 you will be notified by mail where you will pick up your order. The location will also be announced in **The GULL** for October. There will be a pick-up point in San Francisco and one in Berkeley, each centrally located and easily accessible.

For mobility impaired seniors GGAS will provide free delivery on the pick-up day.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to process orders and help with seed deliveries to mobility impaired seniors on the day of the sale. Can you help? Phone the GGAS office, 843-2222.

Please remember there will be no extra seed for sale on the day of the pick-up. Orders must be prepaid, and received by Oct. 22. Late orders will have to be returned. Send the order form with your check and a self addressed, stamped envelope to GGAS, Room 204, 1550 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

ITEM	WEIGHT	QUANTITY	COST	TOTAL
Field Guide to the Birds of North America (Nat. Geographic			\$16.95	
ADD 6.5% TAX				
CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS				
TOTAL				

Please indicate the location at which you prefer to pick up your order:

() San Francisco () Berkeley

My mobility is impaired and I need to have my seed delivered. I will be at home to receive the order on Nov. 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Phone Signature

My suggestions for other items to be offered at future seed sales are:

Another seed sale might be scheduled for January or February. Would you be interested at that time? () Yes () No

BE SURE TO ENCLOSE YOUR CHECK.

Five American Redstarts were found. A first spring male sang from the same lot used by the Northern Parulas, May 27-June 11 (AG, WG, mob). Another singing male was at Drakes Beach June 15 (EM). A Redstart visited Point Reyes Lighthouse June 16 (RT). An adult male and a female-plumaged bird together at PRBO headquarters on Bolinas Lagoon June 13 (RS) exemplifies how our vagrants can find each other, and occasionally even nest, as this species has in northwestern California.

The four Ovenbirds on SE Farallon arrived almost simultaneously, one June 14 and three the next day (PRBO). A singing male Hooded Warbler south of Jewel Lake was observed June 9-17 (RMcN, JM, IB).

On outer Point Reyes, probably five different male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were located, on June 13 (LCB), June 15-18 (mob), and June 30 (BG). Three of these males were present on June 16, when there were also two females at the Lighthouse (MD, fide RT). Another male Rose-breast was at Fort Cronkhite June 15 (EM).

Male Indigo Buntings were at Stafford Lake June 3 (KC) and Olema July 7 (BS). A female landed on SE Farallon June 13 (PRBO). The White-throated Sparrow at Fish Docks June 2nd (SW) was equalled by one at SE Farallon June 13 (PRBO).

For some people the most exciting vagrant was the **Common Grackle** that played hard-to-see at Nunes June 13-16 (LCB, et al.).

WESTERN LANDBIRDS

One Mountain Chickadee was at Point Reyes Lighthouse June 5 - 22 (AG, WG, KC, mob), and two were seen there June 7 (HG, et al.) A very late Varied Thrush lingered at Nunes Ranch May 31-June 5 (AG, WG). Pt. Pinole and July 4 were unexpected circumstances for a Yellow-breasted

Chat (FAP, DP). A male Western Tanager singing in Cordonices Canyon, Berkeley, during the first half of June (BU) may have been a straggler but could have been breeding locally. An adult Golden-crowned Sparrow befogged at the end of the long break water of Alameda Naval Air Station June 16 (SFB, CS) represents one of our latest records.

Observers: Stephen F. Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Ira Bletz, Kurt Campbell, Harry Carter, Graham Chisholm, Terry L. Coddington, Laura D. Collins, Peter Connors, Nancy Conzett, Michael Duffy, Richard A. Erickson, Leora R. Feeney, Marc Fenner, Shawneen Finnegan, Albert Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Bobbie Gillis, Helen Green, Peggy Gross, Kem Hainebach (KemH), Keith Hansen (KH), Ed Harper, Kevin Hintsa (KHi), George Hugenberg, Carol Kahler, Charles Kahler, Paul Kelly, Roy Lowe, Eugene Makishima, Fred McCollum, Patty McCollum, John McConnell, Teya McElroy, Robert McNab, many observers (mob), Joseph Morlan, Fran Nelson, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Jay F. Penniman), Michael Perrone, Dorothy Pitekla, Frank A. Pitelka, Charles Quinn, Verna Rogers, Chris Roper, Jim Royer, Jan Southworth, Rich Stallcup, Bob Stewart, Chris Swarth, Patrick Sweeney, Ron Thorn, Bertha Underhill, Bruce Walker, Peter White, Mike Wihler, Steve Wilson, David Wimpfheimer.

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY

Observations Editor

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at 524-7421)

BACK YARD BIRDER

The 105° heat didn't seem to slow the vocal and physical actions of the Mockingbird and the family of Western Kingbirds. I, on the other hand, huddled under an umbrella, sipping something cold and wet and taking an occasional dip in the pool.

How do birds, especially those in desert regions, stand the intense heat? Most of them find a shady spot during the hottest part of the day where they rest. All of the birds I saw had open beaks, panting. Since they can't perspire, birds vaporize water in their lungs and release it by panting. By stepping up the ordinary breathing rate by panting, a bird increases the flow of air over moist surfaces. Another form of cooling is called "gular flutter." The skin of the throat is quivered rapidly while the blood flow to the region is increased, thus letting off internal heat. This cooling device is used by birds with fleshy throat pouches such as cormorants, pelicans, frigate-birds and boobies. Owls, herons, egrets, quail, poor-wills, doves, pigeons and roadrunners also use this method.

Some species have developed unique ways of lowering their body temperatures. Not known for its fastidiousness, the American vulture deliberately defecates on its bare legs, causing a drop of 1°C. in temperature. Nothing like living up to one's reputation! Wood storks also use this practice.

Many temperate zone species molt into a thinner plumage for the summer or achieve the same effect by normal feather loss and wear. Instead of fluffing up their feathers to increase insulation as they do during cold weather, they compress their feathers to retain as little body heat as possible.

In Africa it was observed that on

scorching days many large birds such as vultures, kites, storks and ravens sought heat-relief by allowing themselves to be lifted by rising warm columns of air to 2,000 or 3,000 feet where they soar in much cooler air.

One would think that heat-absorptive black would be the worst color for birds in desert climates. But studies have confirmed that solar energy accumulated so efficiently by black plumage may balance the high energy expenditure required to maintain adequate body temperature during the frigid desert night and during food-foraging activity in the still cold desert mornings. Black species can easily seek shade and remain quiet during the searing midday heat when their color would be a distinct disadvantage. Birds such as vultures have been seen perched with their wings outspread, thus dissipating body heat by increasing their body surface area. It's also interesting to note that these desert "black birds" are usually species not vulnerable to large predators since they are very conspicuous against desert landscapes. Most other desert birds have cryptic coloration so as to blend in with their habitat.

All animals require water. In general, most birds depend on surface water for their needs. However, where water is scarce or unavailable, desert birds depend on succulent plants, insects and reptiles for their moisture requirements. If plenty of the latter is at hand, some species of birds can go for weeks or even months without drinking water. Still, most birds are as attracted to water as they are to food, which you've no doubt noticed in your own yard.

The next time you're uncomfortably hot, be glad you can perspire or cool off in an easier manner than most birds!

—MEG PAULETICH

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The two sections of the Conservation Committee will resume meetings in September. The Berkeley section will meet Tuesday, Sept. 11 at the GGAS office at 7:30 p.m. For location and date of the San Francisco meeting, please phone chairman Art Feinstein at 282- 5937.

OAKLAND MUSEUM DOCENT TRAINING

September begins another docent training class for the Natural Sciences Department of the Oakland Museum. There is a fee of \$75 for a course which includes three quarters of academic training in California Ecology and one semester of in-gallery training, plus field trips, research papers and independent study. Trained volunteers are required to serve a minimum of twenty half-days per year.

Questions and or appointments for interviews should be directed to Oakland Museum's Docent Council office, 273-3514. Recruitment closes August 31.

AUDUBON BAY SHORE STUDIES VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are looking for a useful and enjoyable volunteer experience, if you need something new in your life, some excitement, a good worthwhile cause, then here's a program to consider. The Bay Shore Studies at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center offers fall training classes starting Sept. 21 at 9:30 a.m.

All that is required is an interest in the out of doors and a desire to share. The course presents it with children.

marine biology, bay ecology and how to lead groups of students who come to the Center to learn. Telephone Aleda Carnes at 388-8853 or the Audubon Center at 388-2524.

MONO LAKE BENEFIT —LUXURY TOUR

There are still places available in the tour announced in the last issue of the GULL. Interested parties may call Grace de Laet at 398-6744.

WESTERN MEXICO — Nov. 16-26

The Mazatlan - San Blas area of western Mexico is the area of transition between temperate and tropical birding. This area harbors more endemic species of birds than any other in Mexico, including the Tufted Jay, Blue-rumped Parrotlet, Red-breasted Chat and White-striped Woodcreeper. New families of birds, such as Tityra, Euphonia, Silky-Flycatcher, Solitaire, Attila, Saltator, Wood Rail and many others, make this a truly tropical experience. In the Sierra Madre we will also see new, related species of birds familiar to North America.

This area features comfortable accommodations, good roads and spectacular scenery. Our tour will be at a leisurely pace, with time for swimming and resting in the lowlands. In the Durango Mountains it will be cool and pleasant throughout the day. Travel distances are short, allowing maximum time for viewing wildlife and the scenery.

The tour leaders are Chris Carpenter, who has led popular trips to Mexico, Peru, Panama, Costa Rica and Texas, as well as many local trips for GGAS, and Joe Morlan, one of California's leading birders and editor of GGAS' Northern California Rare

Bird Alert, who will be making his third trip to western Mexico.

Price of the tour is \$1295, which includes all meals, lodging and transportation, including airfare. The tour is limited to ten participants. For information call Chris at 376-6802.

RARE BIRD ALERTS REVISITED

For the first time ever, GGAS is offering printed copies of the 1983 RARE BIRD ALERTS for the avid birder. Our initial offering will include the September and October weekly reports. Joe Morlan's careful instructions to the locations of vagrant birds of last year will be there before you in living print. This will allow eager birders to be early on the spot just waiting for the return of some rare warbler in drab fall plumage. Or, by following such instructions as "take I 580 east to I 205 to I 5 north to Hwy. 120 . . . Proceed for just over seven miles past the entrance to urham Ferry . . . large clearing on the right, surrounded by cottonwoods," you are likely to find . . . ! (The answer can be found in the Sept. 14, 1983 RBA.)

September and October 1983 RBAs are being offered at \$3.00 for the complete packet (that's only 37½ cents a week). To get this hot item send your check and a stamped (37 cents self addressed legal size envelope to GGAS Room 204. 1550 Shattuck Avenue., Berkeley, CA 94707, or come in to pick up your copy.

—HELEN GREEN

COOPER SOCIETY MEETING

The first monthly meeting this fall, on Monday, Sept. 10, will feature Phil Detrich talking about "Bald Eagles in Northern California: History and Current Status." Phil is consultant to

Carter House Natural History Museum in Redding, Calif. Over the past eight years he has been studying the distribution and status of the Bald Eagle in California while working for the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and California Fish and Game.

The seminar will be in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, UC Berkeley, at 8 p.m. It will be preceded at 7:45 p.m. by a brief business meeting of the Northern California Chapter of the Cooper Ornithological Society. Everyone interested in birds is welcome.

FALL BIRD CLASSES IN SAN FRANCISCO

Everyone is still welcome to join one of our free evening bird classes at the Galileo-Marina Community College Center. Classes are available for all levels. Joe Morlan is the instructor. See The GULL for July-August or call the college at 931-3595 for more information.

ABOUT THE MAILING OF THE GULL

The last two issues of The GULL have been delivered in most zip-coded areas in reasonable time. We have been in touch with officials in the Postal Service responsible for, and apparently from results, interested in providing service. The GULL is now marked clearly "Second Class" and the date of mailing is printed near the address label. In addition, the company that provides mailing service for us is modifying the packaging of mail for some zip-codes. We will continue to work with the Postal Service to avoid future problems. Your comments are welcome.

In the past we have urged you to complain to your local post office if your copy is late. This is still correct, but you should take the trouble to fill out a complaint form, and in doing this, mention that **The GULL** is mailed as Second Class Matter. We found in following up on some specific complaints that the member did not mention **The GULL** by name, and in one instance referred to a problem with "bulk mail". **The GULL** is entitled to what is called newspaper preference; we will hope that it receives it.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

The **GULL** for June included a request for a response from the membership about interests, willingness to serve as volunteers, suggestions to improve GGAS, and included an invitation to contribute to the operating budget. About 1% of our members sent in completed questionnaires. Quality, however, was much better than quantity, and there were worthwhile suggestions and contributions amounting to \$600. Volunteers offered their services, and now that vacations are over, we will be getting in touch with them.

As an inducement, a drawing was announced, with a wildlife print as a prize. The drawing will be conducted at the September meeting. Thanks to those who sent replies.

PIEDMONT BIRDING

Dr. Michael Perrone will again offer a birding class through Piedmont Adult School. The course, sponsored by GGAS, will focus on identification of birds by their behavior, habitats, appearance and voice. It includes six evening classroom lectures, illustrated with color slides, and four or five Saturday morning birdwalks. The class will visit local East Bay birding sites to find landbirds, shorebirds, and

waterbirds. Beginners are welcome.

For information, call Piedmont Adult School, 653-9454 or 658-3679, day or night. The class starts Wednesday, September 19, and ends Saturday, October 27. It will meet at Piedmont High School, 800 Magnolia Avenue.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

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The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

--- SECOND CLASS MATTER



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

Office: 843-2222

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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.